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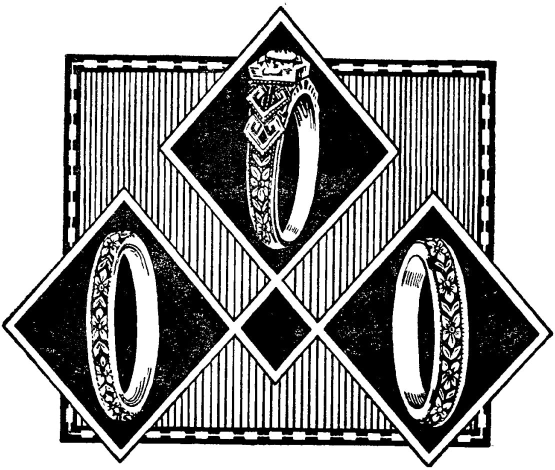

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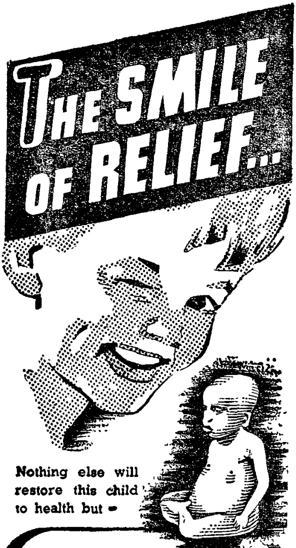

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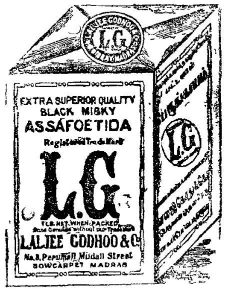

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HOW SRI RAMAKRISHNA TOUCHES THE MODERN HEART

By the one word, Kamakanchana (lust and gold) Sri Ramakrishna hit off the whole host of impediments to spiritual progress. As for himself he saw the Divine Mother in every woman; to his disciples and devotees he used to say: 'you see, even as butter melts in the proximity of fire, the aspirant's mind melts in the presence of the other sex'. Gold, he could not even bear its touch, and he insisted on his disciples embracing the life of poverty. With such teaching before them, one wonders how his followers are justified in running Hospitals, Rescue Homes and Schools for both sexes, as also numerous Industrial Institutes and factories which bring them in close contact with money. When Sri Ramakrishna was taken to school and saw bread-winning education being doled out there, he said, 'Fie on this education. I don't want this. I want something better.' But his Mission is doling out this bread-winning education to thousands!

Why should his disciples and his Mission proceed along paths which Sri Ramakrishna asked to avoid or himself despised? The answer is here.

Was he not a Jivanmukta, a released soul, one beyond the miserable round of births and deaths? And still what made him say these words time and again: 'I shall take a thousand births if I could help one man'? Nothing but his suicidal love for man, which was to him another word for love of God. He had no sin; he suffered for the sins of others. In the face of this personal testimony nothing more is needed to convince us that it is this heavenly Love that is born again and again in the centres of his Mission, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to nurse the sick, to educate the illiterate and also to take the world-weary souls across the sea of life.

That Love! Where can we find the like? The love that fed the 'westernised' Noren from his orthodox plate, the love that could not breathe freely until the hungry ones at Deoghar were fed, the love that could not suffer a flower being plucked or the grass being trampled, the love that felt the thrashings on the fisherman's back so unbearable that they left marks on his back, is now serving society.

If some miss the flare of this love in him or in his teachings it is because Sri Ramakrishna gave it according to capacity and taste diluting it with knowledge, the knowledge 'that all that exists is One and he that One,' the knowledge that said with a smile when his illness forbade him to take any food: 'Why should you think that I am not taking. I eat through the million mouths'. For him love for God and knowledge of the One, Bhakti and Jnana were not different. The love that felt the blow on the fisherman's back as on his own, and the knowledge that realised the million mouths as his own, are the two sides of the same coin.

That love has not spent itself. In the various centres of his Glory it stands touching and transforming one and all that pass that way. Which heart old or modern is so hard that it will not melt at the touch of this love? Love softens even the beast! Which heart can resist it and be not converted by this Religion of Love of Sri Ramakrishna, the religion that asks nothing of us but our own transformation and Bliss?

The modern man either believes or is in scientific doubt. He has either a heart or a head. To the scientific temper God and religion have a finality about them. Absence of finality is the essence of the scientific spirit. The scientific minds are after the never-final, ever-unfolding Mystery that is behind this universe. To these Sri Ramakrishna beckons with the palm of knowledge speaking in their language: 'Blessed are those that worship this Mystery with accuracy and devotion. I myself worshipped it with scientific exactness and with a determination to take the Truth only at first-hand. (Was he not exact even on the plane of matter throwing away all property he had?) And when Truth dawned I realised that all that Mystery (the Mother) and I are one. May you be blessed with this realisation.'

With the palm of Love he beckons to the believing, with the palm of knowledge he beckons to the scientific-minded. He invites us all to the kingly banquet of Immortality. He is irresistible!

OUR EDUCATION LOOKS BEFORE AND AFTER

The year in India has began with a bumper crop of Education Conferences in different parts of the country. It seems we have celebrated a glorious Education-month. The Education sub-committee of the Post-war Reconstruction Committee which had its sittings at Madras in the last week of December, the Wardha Basic Education Conference at Sewagram in the second week of January, the Central Board of Education meeting at Karachi, and the Gujrat Muslim Education Conference at Ahmedabad have, by their deliberations and numerous resolutions set many of us thinking and made us education-minded. One thing must have been pretty comforting to many: though the conferences had behind them dissimilar ideologies, were talking similar 'language.' The pictures of the individual as he ought to be in education and of the future of education visualised by the Basic Education and the Central Board (with these two only we are concerned here) have an apparent similarity. On the basis of reports from Basic schools run in Kashmir, Bombay, C. P. and other centres, the Basic Education Conference claimed that the children in the Basic schools are more active, cheerful and self-reliant, that their powers of self-expression are well-developed, that they are acquiring habits of co-operative work and that social prejudices are breaking down. Sir Jogendra Singh, the Education member for the Government of India, in his address to the Central Education Board at Karachi referring to the Sargent Report said:

> The aim of education is to enrich the body, the mind and the factors governing wealth and above all to release the soul from the slavery of the self. As long as individual, sectional or material intetests count for more than vital human interests of all the people, education has failed to accomplish its purpose. In the Central Advisory Board of Education's report, (that is, the Sargent Report) we may claim to have surveyed the entire field of education.

It must be said that the claim of the Basic Scheme is based on what it has achieved in the field whereas the Central Board is still on its 'report' stage or 'survey' stage. Nevertheless, so far as the aims and ideals set forth by both schemes are concerned, they walk abreast. Only, they don't go together far enough. They can't. From where will come the hundreds of crores of rupees that will have to be found for implementing the Sargent Scheme? The Education member easily answers, from the Central revenues. What

is the answer of the Basic Scheme? It starts and ends with the word, self-supporting. It does not ask any money from Central revenues. It wants 'men' and it asks the nation and not the Government. It begins by making the student self-supporting even during his education period and ends by making the village self-supporting. Almost its first resolution was that education should be so organised that the adult pupil will earn enough to defray his cost of education and that he will produce from his craft-centred education such articles of social and educational utility that the rural economy will be put on a self-sufficient basis. Sir Jogendra Singh disclosed the amount of subvention the Government of India is prepared to make during the next five years and hoped that with the figure before them the provinces should feel encouraged to plan on the lines of the Government Scheme. We rather feel that the provinces have reason to be discouraged and depressed. There is no reason to suppose that the State, especially when it subsidises an educational scheme, will ever place the interests of the child before its own interests. We have yet to see an instance in history where the Central State authority financed an educational scheme and did not use its power to maintain the *status quo* in education, where it did not suppress 'subversive' forces working for the child, and where it did not use its education as an instrument to further the State's interests. We have no reason to suppose that the Government of India will be an exception. Sick of the *status quo* and the stupid State intervention in education, sick of the criminal inadequacy and waste in the existing system, India has been praying for an all-round, self-supporting and national scheme which will give her children an education for life. She asked for bread and received a stone! And when bread is forthcoming from Wardha, the offer has been drowned in the din of a counterblast from the Centre!

There seems to be an implicit assumption in the Sargent scheme that India must industrialise herself and take her place with the great industrial nations. The seven and odd resolutions of the Education Sub-committee of the Post-War Reconstruction Committee urging wider facilities for technical education confirm this assumption. Is the committee really serious about industrialising India or is it anxious for increasing India's output of war-materials which can be stepped up only by better conditions for technical education? Has there been any real *Indian* industrialisation since the war began to justify the *bona fides* of the committee's anxiety for increase in Indian technical skill? The answer will be a painful negative. The Sub-committee of Post-War Reconstruction was more concerned about the returning soldier and his rehabilitation than about the starving and dying men in the villages. Is there any stress on technical education in the Wardha Scheme, one may ask. It resolved that 'technical research should aim at making decentralised and small-scale production successful. The primary object of production should be internal self-sufficiency of the nation and provide the means of happiness, instead of earning profit and interest through trade and commerce'.

The building-up of a complete individual who will be a useful and productive social unit, the organization of a self-sufficient non-competitive rural economy and the creation of a new social order in India are India's needs to-day and it is to these tasks that the Wardha Scheme addresses itself. The Government instead of helping the pace of these plans is indulging in counter-schemes and counterblasts. National India though optimistic, is depressed to see this pull in an opposite direction. She looks back on her hoary glorious ideals of a complete education now brought to life by the Wardha Scheme but receiving scant courtesy; she looks before her into the beeming face of the new Western education implanted on her land. The prospect is not at all encouraging. India is anxious to work out a scheme that com-

bines idealism with realism in education. And she has a fair approximation of it in the Wardha Scheme. But it has not elicited sufficient sympathy and support. *India looks before and after and pines for what is not.*

The schemes need not make this division in the educational soul of India. Mr. Sargent pointed out that the scheme sponsored by the Central Education Committee is similar in essential respects to the Wardha Scheme. Still, if the gulf seems unbridgeable and the Sargent scheme unsuited to India, it is because of the Western ideology of education behind it which it wants to foist on India. Srimati Sarojini Naidu, the other day, reminded us that current discussions on educational reform must keep in mind the distinction, a distinction that has been lost sight of for long, the distinction between knowledge and culture. Knowledge is not wisdom and it is wisdom that flowers forth in culture. For nearly a century, education in the West has been for knowledge and not for culture, not for producing intelligent, free and complete *individuals*, but for manufacturing docile *citizens* for a citizen-eating, megalomaniac state. Good and independent individuals are the enemy of the State there, for they cannot be tamed to serve the rabidly national and imperialistic designs of the State. Herein comes the need to bring into bold relief the antithesis between the good citizen and the good individual. The good individual is he who ministers to the good of the whole, of his own state as of others. But the good citizen is a good cog in the wheel of the machine that is the State. Bertrand Russell brought out the distinction nicely when he said that Goethe was a less useful citizen than James Watt, but as an individual must be reckoned superior. Indian education of the genuine type aims at creating individuals like Goethe while western education manufactures citizens like James Watt. The good individual of Indian education will also be a good citizen in the Indian sense, not a military hero as the West wants it. In Fascist countries first and subsequently in other countries, there have been regimentation in schools, drilling and widespread conscription so that education has been a preparation for war. India with her non-aggressive, non-militaristic national character cannot think of accepting this type of education in any form or measure. It is high time that India stops the infiltrations of this dangerous influence.

If man's life is to be satisfactory whether from his own point of view or from that of the world at large, it requires two kinds of harmony. The internal harmony of intelligence, emotion and will and the external harmony with the wills of others. In both these respects, existing education is defective. Internal harmony is prevented by the thwartings and repressions imposed by excessive social taboos and restraints, by the unwise handling of childrens' minds, emotions and impulses. The external harmony is made impossible to-day by the ever-increasing hatred and disharmony between nations and classes. This disharmony between nations is encouraged by education in the present day and could be brought to end by the introduction of international propaganda in schools.

The first duty then of our education is to strive to widen to the utmost intelligence, emotion and will (power) and integrate them in harmony in the complete whole of personality. Specialisation has invaded the field of education and has been creating clerks, doctors, engineers, writers, lawyers and not Men. To balance this process of specialisation there must be the urgently needed process of integration, the effort to integrate all these aspects of knowledge and make them serve the supreme end which is the wisdom of life. The Institute of Human Relations at the Yale University and the addresses at the Harvard Tercentenary are right steps in this direction. It is here that we feel the necessity for evolving a correct, comprehensive philosophy of education. Such philosophy was given in the ideal set before us by the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, in the ideal of a synthesis

of Jnana (intelligence), Yoga (will), Bhakti (emotion) and Karma (action), all pressed into service to produce the balanced life, the Yoga which is the goal of life.

It is said that the road to Utopia lies partly through politics and partly through changes in the individual. We venture to say that it is only through changes in the individual. Politics and political institutions are what individuals make. Bertrand Russell records his agreement with us in the concluding part of his brilliant book, *Education and the Social Order*:

The source of all the troubles does not lie in the external world, nor does it lie in the purely cognitive part of our nature since we know more than men ever knew before. It lies in our emotional habits; it lies in the sentiments instilled in youth; and in the phobias created in infancy. The cure for our problem is to make men sane and to make men sane *they must be educated sanely.* (Italics ours) At present, religion encourages stupidity, and an insufficient sensee of reality; sex education frequently produces nervous disorders,......nationalism as taught in schools implies that the most important duty of youngmen is economic injustice; and competition promotes ruthlessness in the social struggle. ......Is a man to be condemned as immoral and subversive because he wishes to substitute for these elements in the moral education of the present day intelligence, sanity, kindliness, and a sense of justice?

The attempt to incarnate these spiritual elements in the education of the day after banishing its pernicious growths is the fault of the Wardha Scheme. We hope that better counsels would prevail on the powers that be, and make them see eye to eye with India's National educational aspirations. Let us hope that India will not have to suffer for the fault of trying to restore to Education its original full vigour and strength so that it shall achieve its lofty aim of building up the Full Man.

FACTS, FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY

By Dr. A. R. Poduval, M.D.

The last decade or two of the 19th century created among certain physicists and biologists a suspicion that there may be much more in the universe than can be explained by material science. The idea has been growing; and to-day we have among recognised scientists, a philosophy of idealism, which says that the ultimate nature of the Reality is more likely to be spiritual than material. Says Sir James Jeans:

Thirty years ago, we thought or assumed that we were heading towards an ultimate reality of a mechanical kind. It (the Reality) seemed to consist of a fortuitous jumble of atoms, which was destined to perform meaningless dances for a time, under the action of blind purposeless forces, and then fall back to form a dead world. Into this wholly mechanical world, through the play of the same blind forces, life had stumbled by accident. One tiny corner at least, and possibly several tiny corners of this universe of atoms had chanced to become conscious for a time, but was destined in the end, still under the action of blind mechanical foices, to be frozen out, and again leave a lifeless world. Neither a thought-out scheme, nor a purpose in the scheme is implied in this mechanistic idea.

This drift of scientific thought into the plane of spirit or consciousness is not entirely a British idealism, as is exemplified in the writings of Prof. Eddington, Sir James Jeans, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, Prof. Arthur Thompson, Mr. Joseph Needham, and a few others. Among continental physicists and biologists we may mention the names of Einstein, Schrodinger, and Planck who subscribe to the view, that the mind is fundamental, and matter is derivative from consciousness. The fact that these views are not held by all scientists, partly or entirely, and the argument that physicists and biologists are not the best philosophers would certainly be held out by those, who steeped in the hedonism of materialistic conveniences, would cling to every shred of hypothesis that works in their favour. But here is a gleam through the maze of science that shows us a way to explain human experiences, which cannot be entirely explained away by sense perceptions.

Science does not explain why a man is thrown into ecstasy through a work of art, or religious contemplation. If you ask a scientist why a piece of music is delightful, why a woman is beautiful, he will answer, 'very likely, but I know nothing of that'. He will analyse the physical aspects of the musical notes, and express them in terms of waves or vibrations and give us physiological explanations of how these physical effects are received in the brain. He will tell you that a beautiful woman is nothing but a few electrical discharges knocking about in plenty of space. Or, in the case of a 'joke' he will point out that a joke, like a chemical compound is made up of certain ingredients, which can be dissected into the component elements. But we find that we cannot laugh when a joke is so split up; nor can it be re-created by putting the parts together again. The spirit of a joke is in its 'laughableness' and science cannot explain it.

All this tells us that the facts of human experience are not entirely covered up by the facts of science. Matter, so far as human experience goes, is an objective reality. You cannot hit your head against a stone, and say with scientific complascence that a stone as such does not exist in the ultimate analysis. But according to modern science, matter is an abstraction. 'Substantial matter in modern physics has been shredded away; structure and relations only are left.' Further, we find, that these residues of matter can only be explained by mathematical formulae, which, as everybody knows, are not there 'out in the world' but are merely our ways of apprehending the cosmic universe.

Thus the modern physical conception of the universe is merely symbolical; we do not know what is behind the symbols. In the famous simile of Plato: We are like prisoners in a cell with our faces towards the wall, on which we see the shadow of a game that is being played elsewhere. It is more than likely that we gather our impression of the reality by its shadow thrown on the wall. The only redeeming feature is that these shadows tell us, acquainted as we are with the rules of the game, that our idea of it in a great measure coincides with the play as we see it.

In other words, if our mathematical symbolism serves to explain the nature of the phenomenal universe, there is at least a common ground on which our conception of the universe, and the Reality agree. But that does not mean that our explanation of the universe, is the whole explanation; and that when we have so explained it, we have explained all. That is the position of a good many physicists to-day.

In the realm of biology, the tendency again, is towards a non-materialistic explanation of life. Every living organism exhibits an 'inner drive' to reach its appropriate form and structure, and to maintain it afterwards. Driesch, the German biologist cut an embryo in the stage of undifferentiated protoplasm (a stage of a hollow sphere without right or left, top or bottom) and found that each section grew into the complete embryo. Driesch noticed that the cuts may be made in any plane; and if by too many cuts the embryo was not mutilated, each piece grew into the whole embryo and would continue to develop into the adult organism. This tells us that any cell in it may be a liver cell or a blood cell or a nerve cell, and the organism seems to decide what shall be what. It is obvious, that this phenomenon cannot be properly interpreted unless we regard the organism to possess something analogous to an 'intention' which certainly is not material.

Although scientists are still in the habit of making use of such expressions, 'as the mechanism of circulation, or respiration etc.' to mean parts of the vital process, it is becoming more and more evident, that mechanism does not explain the living qualities of an organism. An organism is a 'whole', which cannot be explained by the sum of its parts. A living being in this respect is a mathemati-

cal paradox—the part is greater than the whole.

I shall not attempt here any discussion of the biological aspects of life and mind; but merely wish to point out that the difficulty of accepting life as the result of the peculiar materialistic composition of protoplasm, has been felt by various thinkers. The mystery of life and mind is felt both by the physicist and biologist. Prof. Lloyd Morgan's *Emergent Evolution*, Prof. Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, General Smuts' *Holism*, etc. are efforts in the direction of affording some explanation for this mystery.

One fact emerges from the foregoing: The mechanist-materialistic conception of the universe is inadequate to explain matter and life; much more, human experience. Science obviously tackles one aspect of the Reality—that aspect which can be observed by means of its special instruments, and expressed in its own language. It is a subjective interpretation and is liable to subjective errors. As for the real objects of science, atoms and electrons, these appear very elusive when looked at from the present standpoint. And yet human experience cannot be so easily brushed aside with the remark that an objective reality does not exist; that as science says, 'substance is an illusion' it must necessarily be so. In the mathematical conception of the universe, the universe of the senses is merely a 'symbol'. A symbol of what? Science cannot answer that question.

As I have already pointed out, there are certain human experiences, such as the appreciation of beauty, the feeling of awe that we have in the presence of certain scenes in nature, religious ecstasy, the sense of humour, etc., for which science offers no explanation. If science tells us that these are purely subjective, we can with equal reason say, that its 'mathematical equations' for the universe are equally subjective. They do not exist there out in the universe. Hence aesthetic and religious experiences have as much validity as scientific experiences. Some scientists, Prof. Schrodinger, for example, seem to regard science as a comparatively insignificant means of access to Reality. 'In the new universe, it appears, our religious insight is granted as great validity as our scientific insight. Indeed, in the opinion of the greatest creator of them all (Einstein) our religious insight is the source and guide of our scientific insight,' (J. W. N. Sullivan).

I have had occasion to state elsewhere that the approach to reality, is probably not through science, but through art, through the appreciation of Nature and above all through religion. The drift of modern science and philosophy only tends to strengthen me in this idea.

AN UNPUBLISHED LECTURE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

II

Our teacher was an old man who would never touch a coin with his hands. He took just the little food offered, just so many yards of cotton cloth, no more. He could never be induced to take any other gift. With all these marvellous ideas, he was strict, because that made him free. The monk in India is the friend of the prince, to-day dines with him; and to-morrow he is with the beggar, sleeps under a tree. He must come into contact with everyone, must always move about. As the saying is, 'The rolling stone gathers no moss'. The last fourteen years of my life, I have never been for three months at a time in any one place—continually rolling. So do we all.

Now, this handful of boys got hold of these ideas, and all the practical results that sprang out of these ideas. Universal religion, great sympathy for the poor, and all that, are very good in theory, but one must practise.

Then came the sad day when our old teacher died. We nursed him the best we could. We had no friends. Who would

listen to a few boys, with their crank notions? Nobody. At least, in India, boys are nobodies. Just think of it—a dozen boys, telling people vast, big ideas, saying they are determined to work these ideas out in life. Why, everybody laughed. From laughter, it became serious; it became persecution. Why, the parents of the boys came to feel like spanking every one of us. And the more we were derided, the more determined we became.

Then came a terrible time—for me personally, and for all the other boys as well. But to me came such misfortune! On the one side was my mother, my brothers. My father died at that time, and we were left poor! Oh, very poor, almost starving all the time. I was the only hope of the family, the only one who could do anything to help them. I had to stand between my two worlds. On the one hand, I would have to see my mother and brothers starve unto death; on the other, I had believed that this man's ideas were for the good of India and the world, and had to be preached and worked out. And so the fight went on in my mind for days and months. Some time I would pray for five or six days or nights together, without stopping. Oh, the agony of those days! I was living in hell! The natural affections of my boy's heart drawing me to my family—I could not bear to see those who were the nearest and dearest to me suffering. On the other hand, nobody to sympathise with me. Who would sympathize with the imaginations of a boy? Imaginations that caused so much suffering to others! Who would sympathise with me? None—except one.

That one's sympathy brought blessing and hope. She was a woman. Our teacher, this great monk, was married when he was a boy, a mere child. When he became a young man, and all this religious zeal was upon him, he came to see his wife. Although they had been married as children, they had not seen very much of each other until they were grown up. Then he came to his wife and said: 'Behold, I am your husband; you have a right to this body. But I cannot live the sex life although I have married you. I leave it to your judgment.' And she wept and said: 'God speed you. The Lord bless you! And I the woman to degrade you? If I can, I will help you. Go on in your work.'

That was the woman. The husband went on and became a monk, in his own way; and from a distance the wife went on helping as much as she could. And later, when the man had become a great spiritual giant, she came—really, she was the first disciple—and she spent the rest of her life taking care of the body of this man. He never knew whether he was living or dying, or anything. Sometimes, when talking, he would get so excited that if he sat on live charcoals he did not know it. Live charcoals! Forgetting all about his body, all the time.

Well, that lady, his wife, was the only one who sympathized with the idea of those boys. But she was powerless. She was poorer than we were. Never mind! We plunged into the breach. I believed, as I was living, that these ideas were going to rationalise India and bring better days to many lands and foreign races. With that belief, came the realisation that it is better that a few persons suffer than that such ideas should die out of the world. What if a mother or two brothers die? It is a sacrifice. The heart must be plucked out and the bleeding heart placed upon the altar. Then great things are done. Is there any other way? None have found it. I appeal to each one of you, to those who have accomplished any great thing. Oh, how much it has cost! What agony! What torture! What terrible suffering is behind every deed of success, in every life. You know that, all of you.

And thus we went on, that band of boys. The only thing we got from those around us was a kick and a curse—that was all. Of course, we had to beg from door to door for our food—got hips and haws—the refuse of everything. A piece of bread here and there. We got hold of a broken-down old house, with hissing cobras living

underneath; and, because that was the cheapest, we went into that house and lived there.

Thus we went on for some years, in the meanwhile making excursions all over India, trying to bring about the idea gradually. Ten years were spent without a ray of light! Ten years more! A thousand times despondency came; but there was one thing always to keep us hopeful—the tremendous faithfulness to each other, the tremendous love between us. I have got a hundred men and women together around me: if I become the devil himself to-morrow, they will say: 'Here we are still! We'll never give you up!' That is a great blessing. In happiness, in misery, in famine, in pain, in the grave, in heaven or in hell, he who never gives me up is my friend. Is such friendship a joke? A man may have salvation through such friendship. That brings salvation, if we can love like that. If we have that faithfulness, why, there is the essence of all concentration. You need not worship any gods in the world if you have that faith, that strength, that love. And that was there with us all throughout that hard time. That was there. That made us go from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin from the Indus to Brahmapootra.

This band of, boys began to travel about. Gradually we began to draw attention: ninety per cent was antagonism, very little of it was helpful. For we had one fault, we were boys in poverty and with all the roughness of boys. He who has to make his own way in life is a bit rough, he has not much time to be smooth and suave and polite—' my lady and my gentleman,' and all that. You have seen that in life, always. He is a rough diamond, he has not much polish, he is a jewel in an indifferent casket.

And there we were. 'No compromise!' was the watchword. This is the ideal and this has got to the carried out. If we meet the king, though we die, we must give him a bit of our minds: if the peasant, the same.' Naturally we met with antagonism.

But, mind you, this is life's experience; if you really want the good of others, the whole universe may stand against you and cannot hurt you. It must crumble before your power. You have all the power of the Lord Himself in you, if you are sincere and really unselfish. And those boys were that. They came as children, pure and fresh from the hands of nature. Said our Master: 'I want to offer at the altar of the Lord only those flowers that have not even been smelled, fruits that have not been touched with the fingers.' The words of the great man sustained us all. For he saw through the future life of those boys that he collected from the streets of Calcutta, so to say. People used to laugh at him when he said: 'You will see—this boy, that boy, what he becomes.' His faith was unalterable. 'Mother showed it in time! I may be weak, but when she says this is so—She can never make mistakes—it must be so.'

So things went on and on for ten years without any light, but with my health breaking all the time. It tells on the body in the long run: sometimes one meal at nine in the evening, another time a meal at eight in the morning, another after two days, another after three days—and always the poorest and roughest things. Who is going to give to the beggar the good things he has? And then, they have not much in India. And most of the time walking, climbing snow peaks, sometimes ten miles of hard mountain climbing, just to get a meal. They eat unleavened bread in India, and sometimes they have it stored away for twenty or thirty days, until it is harder than bricks; and then they will give a square of that. I would have to go from house to house to collect sufficient for one meal. And then the bread was so hard, it made my mouth bleed to eat it. Literally, you can break your teeth on that bread. Then I would put it in a pot and pour over it water from the river. For months and months I existed that way—of course it was telling on the health.

Then I thought, I have tried India; it is time for me to try another country. At that time your Parliament of Religions was to be held, and someone was to be sent from India. I was just a vagabond, but I said, 'If you send me, I am going. I have not much to lose, and I do not care if I lose that.' It was very difficult to find the money, but after a long struggle they got together just enough to pay for my passage—and I came. Came one or two months early so that I found myself drifting about in the streets here, without knowing anybody.

But finally the Parliament of Religions opened and I met kind friends, who helped me right along. I worked a little, collected funds, started two papers, and so on. After that I went over to England and worked there. At the time I carried on the work for India in America, too.

My plan for India, as it has been developed and centralised, is this: I have told you of our lives as monks there, how we go from door to door, so that religion is brought to everybody without charge, except, perhaps, a broken piece of bread. That is why you see the lowest of the low in India holding the most exalted religious ideas. It is all through the work of these monks. But ask a man, 'Who are the English?'—he does not know. He says perhaps, 'They are the children of those giants they speak of in those books, are they not?' 'Who governs you?' 'We don't know'. 'What is the government?' They don't know. But they know philosophy. It is a practical want of intellectual education about life on this earth they suffer from. These millions and millions of people are ready for life beyond this world—is not that enough for them? Certainly not. They must have a better piece of bread and a better piece of rag on their bodies.

First, I must tell you there is great hope for them, because, you see, they are the gentlest people on earth. Not that they are timid. When they want to fight, they fight like demons. The best soldiers the English have are recruited from the peasantry of India. Death is a thing of no importance to them. Their attitude is, 'Twenty times I have died before, and I shall die many times after this. What of that?' They never turn back. They are not given to much emotion, but they make very good fighters.

Their instinct, however, is to plough. If you rob them, murder them, tax them, do anything to them, they will be quiet and gentle, so long as you leave them free to practise their religion. They never interfere with the religion of others. 'Leave us liberty to worship our gods, and take everything else!' That is their attitude. When the English touch them there, trouble starts. That was the real cause of the '57 mutiny—they would not bear religious repression. The great Mohammedan governments were simply blown up because they touched the Indian's religion.

But aside from that, they are very peaceful, very quiet, very gentle, and, above all, not given to vice. The absence of any strong drink, oh, it makes them infinitely superior to the mobs of any other country. You cannot compare the decency of life among the poor in India with life in the slums here. A slum means poverty, but poverty does not mean sin, indecency, and vice in India. In other countries, the opportunities are such that only the indecent and the lazy need be poor. There is no reason for poverty unless one is a fool or a blackguard—the sort who want city life and all its luxuries. They won't go into the country. They say, 'We are here with all the fun, and you must give us bread.' But that is not the case in India, where the poor fellows work hard from morning to sunset, and somebody else takes the bread out of their hands, and their children go hungry. Notwithstanding the millions of tons of wheat raised in India, scarcely a grain passes the mouth of a peasant. He lives upon the poorest corn, which you would not feed to your canary birds.

But there is no reason why they should suffer such distress—these people; oh, so pure and good! We hear so much talk

about the sunken millions, and the degraded women of India—but none come to our help. What do they say? They say: 'You can only be helped, you can only be good by ceasing to be what you are. It is useless to help Hindus.' These people do not know the history of races. There will be no more India if they change their religion and their institutions, because that is the vitality of that race. It will disappear, so, really, you will have nobody to help.

Then there is the other great point to learn: that you can never help, really. What can we do for each other? You are growing in your own life, I am growing in my own. It is possible that I can give you a push in your life, knowing that, in the long run, all roads lead to Rome. It is a steady growth. No national civilization is perfect, yet. Give that civilization a push, and it will arrive at its own goal: don't strive to change it. Take away a nation's institutions, customs and manners, and what will be left? They hold the nation together.

But here comes the very learned foreign man, and he says: 'Look here: you give up all those institutions and customs of thousands of years, and take my tom-fool tin pot and be happy.' This is all nonsense.

We will have to help each other, but we have to go one step farther: the first thing is to become unselfish in help. 'If you do just what I tell you to do, I will help you. Otherwise not.' Is that help?

And so, if the Hindus want to help you spiritually, there will be no question of limitations: perfect unselfishness. I give, and there it ends. It is gone from me. My mind, my powers, my everything that I have to give, is given: given with the idea to give, and no more. I have seen many times people who have robbed half the world, and they gave $ 20,000 'to convert the heathen.' What for? For the benefit of the heathen, or for their own souls? Just think of that.

And the Nemesis of crime is working. We men try to hoodwink our own eyes. But inside the heart, He has remained, the real Self. He never forgets. We can never delude Him. His eyes will never be hoodwinked. Whenever there is any impulse of real charity, it tells, though it be at the end of a thousand years. Obstructed, it yet wakens, once more to burst like a thunderbolt. And every impulse where the motive is selfish, self-seeking—though it may be launched forth with all the newspapers blazoning, all the mobs standing and cheering—it fails to reach the mark.

I am not taking pride in this. But, mark you, I have told the story of that group of boys. Today there is not a village, not a man, not a woman in India that does not know their work and bless them. There is not a famine in the land where these boys do not plunge in and try to work and rescue as many as they can. And that strikes to the heart. The people come to know it. So help whenever you can, but mind what your motive is. If it is selfish, it will neither benefit those you help, nor yourself. If it is unselfish, it will bring blessings upon them to whom it is given, and infinite blessings upon you, sure as you are living. The Lord can never be hoodwinked. The law of Karma can never be hoodwinked.

(*Concluded*)

MY MONEY IS MY OWN TO SPEND AS I PLEASE! BUT—IS IT?

By Prof. P. S. Naidu, Allahabad University

The ancient, proverb 'Waste not, want not' is so commonplace, and has such a platitudinous ring about it that we are likely to miss its deeper significance. The critical times we are passing through, however, have opened our eyes to the far-reaching social repercussions of waste in the life of the individual citizen. The intense drive for rescuing from waste all kinds of goods—from scrap iron up to the most precious drugs required for saving life—has been launched none too soon. An organised effort of this type to conserve commodities, which after all represent the output of human energy, is not usually made in peace time. Why, we may ask, is it that the urge to conserve and economise is not felt in any great strength under normal conditions of life? Is the severe pressure of war economy necessary to make us realise the evil consequences of waste? Is man wasteful by nature? These are questions which challenge us and demand suitable answers from us.

What is waste? Waste is the failure to utilise or to utilise with maximum effectiveness, the natural means for the satisfaction of human wants. Nature may be viewed as a vast system or organisation of energy of various types. These types are of a limited range, and man has to transform them into consumable forms in order to satisfy his own needs. To this end nature has endowed man with intelligence. But man's intelligence has not always functioned aright. So there has been a misuse or mis-direction of natural energy, and this has led to waste.

Waste is, in the first instance, caused by the misdemeanour of individuals and may be of two types—(1) the casting away or destruction of useful commodities through neglect or ignorance and (2) the mis-directed spending of money in the purchase of luxuries. Both types have consequences reaching far beyond the sphere of the wasteful individual's life. In fact they bear on the life of the nation as a whole. In the complex organisation of modern civilisation every single citizen functions as an organic part of the whole nation, and so the nation has the right to demand that the individual should so order his daily life that he wastes not the energy at his disposal. No one at the present day can say, 'This is *my* money, so I have the right to do what I please with it'. Not only does individual wastefulness lead to want in that individual's future, but also causes hardship to other citizens and to the nation as a whole.

It is one of the paradoxes of history that serious concern for waste as a social problem appears only after society has entered upon a life of potential abundance. In earlier days waste and thrift were considered matters of individual concern. Since then, right up to the present time there has been a good deal of indifference and *laissez faire* in regard to this matter. And suddenly man has found to his dismay that while one part of the world is starving for want of food, in another part foodgrains are destroyed under the plea of over-production! While we condemn individual wastefulness as criminal, we applaud organised national waste! A remedy for the unfortunate state of affairs must be found, and it can be found only when those who have money to spend grasp and act on the very simple fact that 'since the producing power of mankind is limited, every superfluous and useless article that they buy, every extravagance that they commit, prevents the production of the necessities of life for those who are at present in need of them. The man who wants half-a-dozen motor cars, and cannot be comfortable without them, is exceedingly selfish and is taking away bread from the sparse larders of the hungry! We note, then, how ECONOMY really means MANAGEMENT and how the affairs of an individual, house or family are objects of great importance to the nation. This point needs elaboration.

The divisible wealth of the world is limited in size. It really represents the sum total of human energy. It cannot be enlarged at will, but the commodities which it can produce may vary at will. If now we indulge in the enjoyment of extravagant luxuries, such as saloon cars, diamonds, and expensive silks, then a considerable part of the wealth heap of the world will consist of these luxuries. If there had not been this demand for luxuries then the heap would have consisted more of the necessities needed by the poorer classes. In other words every purchase of an article of luxury stiffens the price of articles of necessity, and makes the life of the poor still harder.

Many of us want to buy things not because we really need them, but because our neighbours have them, and we want to be no whit behind them in showing off our possessions. Telephones, shooting materials, showy dress, showy food, tiresome entertainments, wasteful racing and gambling and such other wasteful extravagances consume many crores of rupees which could be saved by us as a nation. Money spent on these is gone as soon as the article purchased is worn out, or the momentary pleasure bought has been enjoyed. On the other hand if all this money had been saved and turned into capital for financing railways, ship-building, water-supply, town-planning, slum clearance, and similar schemes, then that money would have become productive, and for years to come will earn wages for workers and interest for investors.

A renowned economist says, 'For at least half his expenditure a well-to-do man does not know what he wants, and out of the other half for at least a half he does not get what he wants . . . Half his furniture is in mimicry of other men's houses. There is only display without beauty or comfort. He pays servants for performing useless, boring and time-wasteful ceremonies'.

If one chooses to waste his money at the bidding of convention, vanity, or vainglory and if one would do so without hurting anybody else, we need take no account of the matter, and only exclaim with Puck,

Lord ! What fools these mortals are !

But when this folly hurts others and becomes a social crime, then it is our solemn duty to din it into the ears of all concerned that mis-directed spending is a social crime, since it takes away food from thousands of hungry mouths !

(Based on a talk broadcast from the A.I.R. Station. Madras, and published by the courtesy of the Station Director, A.I.R., Madras.)

ROMAIN ROLLAND—AN APPRECIATION

Unreal and real reports of the death of Romain Rolland, the eminent French writer and humanist, have come to us. Something tells us to disbelieve these conflicting reports and comforts us to say that he is living. His works whisper in our ears his immortality and his love for things Indian echoes the whisper. Romain Rolland was the finest flower of French genius, a rare blend of the lily and the rose, with the purity of the one and the perfume of the other. He charmed the world with the magic of his rosy literary fragrance and converted it with the lily white radiance of his humanity.

Professor at Sorbonne, Nobel Laureate, author of the famous voluminous work, Jean Christophe, of notable biographies including those of Beethoven, Michael-angelo, Tolstoi, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, Romain Rolland was a mighty intellect. But that was not his *forte*: He was a mystic of rare insight. How else could he have visualised from such distance the pictures of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and given to the world not biographies simply, but documents that emit the fire of the Spirit ? Biography cannot be more profound and powerful. He must have had his reserve from where he irrigated

these channels of literary adventure. He admits this in his life of Sri Ramakrishna:

Neither Shakespeare nor Beethoven nor Tolstoi nor Rome, the masters that nurtured me, ever revealed anything to me, except the 'Open Sesame' of my subterranean city.

It is this that draws us Indians all the more to him. Through his writings which were to him a mystic experience, an Indian experience, he approaches our hearts, a true Indian on western soil, a liaison-officer on his self-chosen mission of interpreting East to the West and *vice versa*. And he has an inimitable way of doing it by putting side by side occidental artists and oriental religious leaders:

But he (Ramakrishna) had realised cosmic joy more fully than our tragic heroes: Joy appeared to Beethoven only as a gleam of blue through the chaos of conflicting clouds, while the Paramahamsa—the Indian swan—rested his white wings on the sapphire lake of eternity beyond the veil of tumultuous days......It was not given to his proudest disciples to emulate him. The greatest of them, the spirit with the widest wings—Vivekananda—could only attain his heights by sudden flights amid tempests which remind me over and over again of Beethoven. (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 4)

Exquisite and apt are his parallels between Christ and Ramakrishna.

Allowing for differences of country and of time Ramakrishna is the younger brother of Christ. Sometimes his precocious intellect took part in the discussions of learned men whom he astonished as Jesus had astonished the Jewish doctors. But he remained to the end of his life like the little Mozart.

He (Ramakrishna) resembles the Little Poor Man of Assissi in many ways, both moral and physical. He too was the tender brother of everything that lives and dies and drunk so deep of the milk of human kindness that he could not be satisfied with a happiness he could not share with others.

And how he shared it with the world? Through his most intellectual and imperious disciple, Swami Vivekananda, his St. Paul:

He founded his Church and his doctrine. He travelled throughout the world and was the aqueduct, akin to those red arches which span the Roman Campagna, along which the waters of the spirit have flowed from India to the Europes (Mother Europe and her brood of the Americas) from the Europes back to India, joining scientific reason to Vedantic faith and the past to the future.

It was the last world war that made Romain Rolland's disillusionment with the West complete and brought him closer to India. From India he saw emerging the Light that will be the future solace of Europe. Consequently he became much interested in India's struggle for freedom and watched with admiration the great non-violent struggle being waged by India under the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. He was one of the few westerners who had faith in the efficacy of Indian wisdom to cure the West of its malady. In his death, the West loses one of its level-headed men, the world a great humanist and India an admiring friend.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—THE AWAKENER*

By Swami Nisreyasananda

Sister Nivedita was one of those English ladies who got attracted towards Swami Vivekananda during his stay in England. She was interested in education herself. Swami Vivekananda appeared to her as a very attractive teacher and she decided to follow him to India and help him in his plans in the uplift of women in India. She did not then know what awaited her as a preparatory step for that work. The moment she came to India she found that her fond dreams of Swami Vivekananda as an attractive teacher were dashed to the ground. Instead he appeared a stern task master, and disciplinarian, not even prepared to allow her to entertain that patronising attitude towards India.

We shall make Nivedita speak: ...... 'I cannot attempt to justify by reason the degree of unhappiness which I experienced at this time ...... And then a time came when one of the older ladies of our party, thinking perhaps that such intensity of pain inflicted might easily go too far, interceded kindly and gravely with the Swami. He listened silently and went away. At evening, however, he returned, and finding

* Condensed from the speech delivered by the Swami at the Math Hall on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's Birthday celebrations.

us together in the verandah, he turned to her and said, with the simplicity of a child, "you are right. There must be a change. I am going away into the forests to be alone, and when I come back I shall bring peace." Then he turned and saw that above us the moon was new, and a sudden exaltation came into his voice as he said, "See! the Mohammedans think much of the new moon. Let us also with the new moon begin a new life!" As the words ended, he lifted his hands and blessed, with silent depths of blessing, his most rebellious disciple, by this time kneeling before him. ...... Long, long ago, Sri Ramakrishna had told his disciples that the day would come when his beloved 'Noren' would manifest his own great gift of bestowing knowledge with a touch. That evening at Almora, I proved the truth of his prophecy. And I understood, for the first time, that the greatest teachers may destroy in us a personal relation only in order to bestow the Impersonal Vision in its place.'

From where did Narendranath get this gift of awakening the souls of the people? For nearly eight years Narendranath had contacted Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna had that wonderful power of awakening the souls. He prescribed different methods of religious discipline to his disciples by practising which each would irrigate and get for oneself his quota of power from that Ocean of Intelligence of the universe. Under Sri Ramakrishna's guidance Narendranath got at that fund of intelligence to transmit to others and transform them. Narendranath came to him, a finished product of western education. And he got transformed into Swami Vivekananda. The same story was repeated a few years hence. In the Parliament of religions at Chicago, when Swami Vivekananda spoke, many finished products of western culture got transformed and became whole--hearted workers in the cause of India. In correct religious discipline there is always the capacity to awaken the souls of people. It does not matter who practises it. Whether a man of the West or of the East, it makes them intellectually disciplined and transformed souls, who dedicate their lives for the welfare of all, *Sarvabhoota hite ratah.* This truth was vindicated at Chicago and at another time at the capital of India. It was experimented on a smaller scale in Mylapore, Bombay or Vizag and the result is that small centres of discipline have come up. Where there is genuine religious discipline it carries with it an irresistible power to transform the lives of men and selfish missions get themselves transformed into selfless missions.

The salvation of India lies in the capacity to practise this discipline, this profound and practical philosophy and to transform souls by the power it generates. Swamiji believed fully that India's path of progress lay along the process of interchange, of giving to the West this power of awakening souls and taking from them the skill of science. Sometime in 1887 Swamiji was asked, 'Is there any hope of our political progress in this kind of interchange.' Swamiji said, 'By preaching the profound secrets of the Vedanta religion in the Western world, we shall attract the sympathy and regard of these mighty nations, maintaining for ever the position of their teacher in spiritual matters, and they will remain our teachers in all material concerns. Nothing will come of crying day and night before them, "Give me this or give me that."' Raise up spiritually eminent men in this country, instead of looking across the ocean and expecting a gift by parcel. Why should we not dedicate all our education for the raising up of spiritual giants? Can we produce hundreds and thousands of Buddhas, Sankaras, Ramanujas, Ramakrishnas and Vivekanandas rather than millions of Khaki dressed soldiers to die on the battlefields? If we can produce such teachers, the salvation of our country is near at hand. If we beg, the Westerners kick, if we fight they crush, but if we *teach*, they bow down.

o o o

For ages past River Cauvery had been falling at the Sivasamudram Falls. A thoughtful engineer saw that Mother Cauvery was determined to fall eternally and so went and prayed: 'O Mother, now that you are determined to fall, why not deign to make your way through these tubes of mine, these turbines'. And a big

generating station of power was the result. Even so Philosophy had been making her inevitable course to Brahman from times immemorial in India and had been falling through the lives of innumerable Sannyasins. It was given to Swami Vivekananda to say: 'Mother Philosophy, your inevitable course is to attain Brahman. Pray, condescend to pass through these tubes of mine, Tyaga, Seva, etc., making the toothed wheels of society work and illumine society. Thus Vedanta was harnessed to social ends, to the setting up of the eternal values of life. And numerous institutions where education was free, where medical help was free, where spiritual ministry was free were the result of this supreme engineering feat of Swami Vivekananda. Sri Krishna drove Arjuna's chariot free. Who can run a school free, a college free, a factory free, a country free?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Nature Cure of Eye-Defects: By L. Kamesvara Sarma, M.A. The Nature-Cure Publishing House, Pudukkottai. Price Rs. 2-0-0. Pp. 74.

'The eye is an extremely delicate organ' begins the book. We would add, a spiritual organ too. For it mirrors the inner spirituality of the man, his personality. Devendranath Tagore saw the saint in Swami Vivekananda mirrored in the latter's eyes. Is it not a sin then to close this well of spirituality with glasses? And what a pity this has become the fashion now-a-days. So the author rightly conducts a crusade against this pernicious fashion and suggests ways and means of avoiding the necessity of glasses through Nature-Cure.

The eye-defects, the author says, are only symptoms of a deeper disease in the system and the cure is not through covering it with beautifully rimmed glasses. Constipation, venereal diseases and impurity of blood are among the many maladies that cause eye-defects. And the cure of these maladies, the author avers, is through druglessness, dietetic righteousness and through Nature-Cure methods. Other remedies like mild sun-gazing, cold baths and palming are also given.

In these days when eye-defects are a spreading scourge, the book is bound to be a boon to many.

Youth's Burden: By Jawaharlal Nehru. Hamara Hindusthan Publications, Bombay.

This is the text of a stirring address by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to students who are the hope of the future. When the whole world is caught up in a tornado of frenzy and passion, the students cannot find better advice and guidance than from Nehru. He exhorts them to broaden their approach to problems, remain critical, to fight those disrupting tendencies and above all to realise the tremendous responsibility that is cast on them of shouldering the burden of provincial, national and international activities.

We congratulate the publishers on bringing out this useful and inspiring booklet.

Glimpses of Divine Vision: By Swami Ramdas. Anandashram, Ramnagar, Kanhangad, S. I. Ry. Price As. 8.

These 'glimpses' were culled from the unpublished letters of the Swami. They are arranged under suitable headings like Meditation, Concentration, Self-surrender, Faith, etc., and are full of practical suggestions to those who are after a spiritual life.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The 83rd Birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Math, Mylapore, on the 5th and 7th January. On the 5th, the Tithi Puja day there was special worship, Homam, Bhajans, and distribution of Prasad to devotees. On the 7th, after Harikatha a meeting was convened in the evening at the Math Hall. Sir V.T. Krishnamachariar presided. Speeches were delivered in Tamil, Telugu and English on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda Swami Nisreyasananda speaking in English (a condensed report of which appears in this issue) observed that Swami Vivekananda was the awakener of souls and that India can work out her salvation by awakening the Western soul, by *teaching* the West. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan proposed a vote of thanks and the function terminated with *arati*.

TRIPLE-SCHEME OF THE KARACHI CENTRE

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